

Dear Sirs and Madams of the Michigan House Judiciary Committee,

My name is Christian Manhart, and I am providing this testimony in reference to house bill 5679. In 1996 I was one of the first five juvenile sex offenders in our state to be placed on SORA. Over the past 24 and ½ years, this public act has affected my life in astronomical ways. From not being able to return to my high school to participate in my graduation, to later in my life having to serve a 24-month prison sentence for failing to report my new work address, and everything in between. Wearing this scarlet letter for nearly 25 years has caused me to lose countless friendships, jobs and opportunities that I should have been afforded because I was not convicted of a sexual offense but adjudicated in family court. The purpose of our family courts is to help wayward youth to become responsible citizens after making mistakes as youth, but because of this draconian legislation, the mistake I made as a 16 year old youth has haunted me to age 40, and if no change is made, will continue to do so for the rest of my life.

As you are well aware, the current structure of SORA has been deemed unconstitutional. The reason you are receiving this letter is because as someone who has been impacted by SORA for many years, I believed I have some insight as how to accomplish both goals of this acts. First and most importantly, is to provide for the safety of the citizens of our great state. Second, but not least, to provide a fair and just treatment for those who have committed offenses that require them to be placed on the registry.

My suggestions are as follows:

- Any person placed on the registry that has not committed a first-degree CSC should not be subject to lifetime registration.
- Any person who has committed a juvenile CSC of any degree with the exception of first-degree should not be placed on the sex offender registry. If a juvenile is adjudicated of a CSC in the first degree they should be on the registry for a period of 15 to 25 years based on the sentencing judge's discretion. This registry should be maintained separately from adult convictions and should continue to be non-public.
- Any person who has had their conviction expunged or set-aside should immediately be removed from the sex offender registry.
- There should not be exclusion zones because these are unenforceable by law-enforcement due to the vague nature of where and when they are placed and when and where there are exemptions.
- Any reforms to this act should never apply retroactively.

I would like to thank this committee for reviewing and taking into consideration not only my testimony that is written here but also for your time and energy to help make our great state of Michigan a safer place for everyone.

Respectfully Yours,

*Christian Manhart*

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